

**Thomas Jefferson to William Short, September 6,
1808, from Thomas Jefferson and William Short
Correspondence, Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W.
Gawalt, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

Thomas Jefferson to William Short

Monticello Sep. 6. 08.

Dear Sir

I avail myself of the last moment allowed by the departure of the post to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 27th & 31st ult. and to say, in answer to the last, that any one of the three persons you there propose would be approved as to their politics, for in appointments to office the government refuses to know any difference between descriptions of republicans, all of whom are in principle, & cooperate with the government. Biddle we know & have formed an excellent opinion of him. His traveling & exercise in business must have given him advantages. I am much pleased with the account you give of the sentiments of the federalists of Philadelphia as to the embargo and that they are not in sentiment with the insurgents of the North. The papers have lately advanced in boldness & flagitiousness beyond even themselves. Such daring and atrocious lies as fill the 3d & 4th columns of the 3d page of the US. Gazette of Aug. 31 were never before I believe published with impunity in any country. However, I have from the beginning determined to submit myself as the subject on whom may be proved the impotency of a free press in a country like ours against those who conduct themselves honestly, and enter into no intrigue. I admit at the same time that restraining the press to truth as the present laws do, is the only way of making it useful. But I have thought necessary first to prove it can never be dangerous. Not knowing whether I shall have another occasion to address you here, be

Library of Congress

assured that my sincere affections & wishes for your success & happiness accompany you every where. Th Jefferson

FC (Jefferson Papers, DLC)